

**Sunday 27 July 2025,
Trinity 6**

Collect:

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for this week:

Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2:6-15; Luke 11:1-13

At the oaks of Mamre Abraham is taken into the Lord's confidence. Our first reading from Genesis follows on from last week's encounter with the three divine persons. The Lord decides that having made a covenant with Abraham to make him ancestor of a great nation he should be trusted with knowledge of the fate coming to the depraved cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Two of the divine persons continue towards those cities, the third remains to appraise Abraham of the situation. The rest of the passage recounts the conversation between the Lord and Abraham. It is a discussion framed in legal terms, determining the offences of Sodom while also looking towards justice. Abraham makes a bold claim for collective justice based not on the crimes of the majority but on the innocence of the minority. The Lord accedes that for the sake of ten innocent ones the city will not be destroyed. The subsequent behaviour of the entire population in the next chapter leads to only Lot and his family being saved. However, we have been shown the possibility of corporate forgiveness brought out by a righteous few and the importance of bold, challenging prayers for mercy.

Psalm 138 opens with words of thanks and praise to God, moves into commendation of God's grace and glory, exploring the impact these have on national rulers, then closes with an expression of trust in the Lord. Paul, in this week's selection from his letter to the Colossians, is also concerned with putting our trust in God, reminding his listeners that Christ should be the keystone to all our plans and decisions. He is arguing against a tendency prevalent in the Colossian community to see Christ as just one of the elemental spirits of the universe and he argues powerfully for them to accept him as the Son of God, as God.

The Gospel reading contains a collection of sayings by Jesus about prayer, including Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer. The passage breaks down into three distinct sections but opens with Jesus at prayer. Jesus prays often in Luke, and this time a disciple requests help in following his example. Jesus responds with a shorter version of the prayer we also, and more familiarly, find in Matthew 6. It contains two brief petitions praising God preceding three for those praying, and it is communal, meant to be prayed by a community longing for the fulfilment of God's kingdom. This is followed by a parable (5-8), framed as a long, winding, question, that highlights the importance of perseverance in prayer. This perhaps also translates into determination to continue working to bring God's kingdom to others. Finally, the passage concludes with a reminder that God is like a parent to us, striving for good for us, but also that God is much more than an earthly parent, with the ability to gift the Holy Spirit to those who ask, the Spirit who is the genesis of the Church and who will nurture, energise and inspire it do carry on doing the work of the Gospel.

God of our pilgrimage,
you have led us to the living water:
refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for next week:

Ecclesiastes 1:2,12-14; 2:18-23; Psalm 49:1-12; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

Trinity 7